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Washington State Department of Revenue Wins National Award for Online Taxpayer Workshops and Video Tutorials

Washington, D. C., March 21, 2006 – The Washington State Department of Revenue's pioneering work using the Internet to assist taxpayers has earned it national recognition.

The Federation of Tax Administrators (FTA) announced today that Revenue won its 2006 Award for Training in the category of Best Use of Technology.

FTA Executive Director Harley Duncan said judges were impressed with Revenue's use of web-based workshops and streaming video tutorials to complement traditional in-person workshops held around the state. They also cited narrated shows on industry-specific taxes and other online services.

"Washington State identified a need for assisting taxpayers, and provided innovative solutions with its web-based workshops and video tutorials," Duncan said. "They did an exemplary job in meeting customer needs while also being cost-effective in terms of saving time and money for both taxpayers and the state."

The training aids stem from the Department's Internet Web Site Initiative to identify the needs of taxpayers and respond with solutions that help them understand and comply with state tax laws, Department Director Cindi Holmstrom said.

Workshops include overviews of the state's tax system, apportionment of taxes by companies that do business in multiple states, and taxes collected and paid by the lodging industry. Such online training assists businesses that are too busy to attend regular workshops, Holmstrom said. More than 25,000 viewings of the online videos took place in the first six months.

"Our goal is to deliver effective, innovative and efficient training programs," she said. "Taxpayer response has been extremely positive."

The video workshops are available at <http://dor.wa.gov/content/doingbusiness/workshops/default.aspx> and other training aids are provided in industry-specific tax sections.

Presentation of the award will take place at the FTA Annual Meeting on June 5 in Little Rock, Arkansas. The Federation of Tax Administrators is a nonprofit organization of tax and revenue departments across the 50 states.

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